



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
April 3, 2008

LOWER RIO GRANDE FLOOD CONTROL LEVEE IMPROVEMENTS ON AGENDA FOR APRIL 16 PUBLIC MEETING

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will give an update on Rio Grande flood control levee improvements at an upcoming public meeting. The meeting of the USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum (LRGCF) will take place April 16, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. at the Rio Grande Valley Partnership, 322 S. Missouri Avenue in Weslaco, Texas. The purpose of the LRGCF is to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

The USIBWC began construction in January to raise the height of United States Rio Grande flood control levees in Cameron County and a new phase of construction is about to begin in Hidalgo County. USIBWC studies have identified levee segments that need to be raised in order to provide adequate protection from the 100-year flood. In Cameron County, USIBWC crews have already completed work on a 5-mile levee segment. Additional levee improvements in Cameron County are underway and will be completed this year. Work is also scheduled to proceed this spring on deficient levee segments in Hidalgo County.

The LRGCF will also hear from Eric Ellman, Executive Director of Los Caminos del Rio, who will discuss his organization's activities in the region. Los Caminos del Rio is seeking National Heritage Area status for the Rio Grande corridor from Laredo to Brownsville. Los Caminos del Rio began in 1991 as a Texas Historical Commission exercise in historic and cultural preservation. Part of the mission of Los Caminos del Rio is to mark the route of towns and historical sites between the Gulf of Mexico,

Brownsville, and Laredo. Los Caminos del Rio also runs an outdoor adventure program that brings people to scenic hidden landscapes throughout the river corridor.

In other business, U.S. Commissioner Carlos Marin will introduce two new managers at USIBWC who will play a leading role in the direction of the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project. Principal Engineer Al Riera will oversee activities from USIBWC Headquarters in El Paso, Texas while Patrick Daize is taking over as Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project Manager at the local USIBWC office in Mercedes.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information can contact the USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Project Office at 956-565-3150 or the Public Affairs Office at sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.

For more information:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM
Wednesday, April 16, 2008
4:00 - 6:00 P.M.
Rio Grande Valley Partnership
322 S. Missouri Avenue
Weslaco, TX

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Bill Lewis, Citizens' Forum Co-Chair
- Introduction of USIBWC Principal Engineer Al Riera and Lower Rio Grande Project Manager Patrick Daize - Carlos Marin, Commissioner, USIBWC
- Activities of Los Caminos del Rio – Eric Ellman, Executive Director, Los Caminos del Rio
- Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Levee Improvement Project – Raymundo Aguirre, Civil Engineer, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

The next meeting will be Wednesday, July 16, 2008.

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time. For more information, call 956-565-3150 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov